



The Cancer Stem Cell Consortium and the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine Announce Plans to Collaborate on Disease Team Awards

At the BIO 2008 Conference in June, the Canadian Minister of Health, the Honourable Tony Clement, and the Governor of the State of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger announced a partnership between Canada's Cancer Stem Cell Consortium (CSCC) and the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) for international collaboration to advance cancer stem cell research.

It is proposed that one of the first initiatives to be launched by the CSCC will be a collaboration between Canadian and Californian scientists through CIRM's upcoming Disease Team Research Awards Competition, which will support multi-disciplinary teams of scientists in pursuit of therapies for specific diseases. The goal is to fund the work of Disease Teams that would result in a cell based therapy or a therapy derived from stem cell assays for a particular disease or serious injury. It is anticipated that the RFA for the Disease Team Research Awards will be issued by CIRM in February 2009 with funding announced before the end of the year. Successful proposals will include a description of milestones on a path to an Investigational New Drug filing at the end of the four-to-five year grant.

CIRM and the CSCC have been working to finalize the details of the collaboration, with approval to be requested later this year from their respective governing bodies. In advance of the formal approval and announcement, the organizations wish to alert the Canadian and Californian scientific communities of this potential opportunity and to encourage teams of Canadian and Californian scientists to initiate activities towards the development of Disease Teams focusing on cancer stem cells. Successful projects, co-led by Canadian and California scientists, will be co-funded by the CSCC and CIRM, with Canadian scientists funded by the CSCC and Californian scientists funded by CIRM. Support for Canadian scientists will primarily be for operating funds and will not include support for major infrastructure or facilities.

Canadian scientists proposing to collaborate with Californian colleagues in a joint Disease Team application must register with the CSCC as soon as possible and no later than November 17, 2008. Applications for funding will be reviewed by CIRM's Grants Working Group as part of the Disease Team Research Awards Competition.

For additional information on the Disease Team Competition please refer to the Report from the Disease Team Workshop http://www.cirm.ca.gov/pub/pdf/DTW_Report.pdf or contact the following individuals:

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For additional details on the CSCC-CIRM collaboration and to register to submit an application please visit www.cancerstemcellconsortium.ca or contact:

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About CIRM CIRM was established in 2005 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. To date, the CIRM governing board has approved 168 research and facility grants totaling more than \$530 million, making CIRM the largest source of funding for human pluripotent, progenitor and cancer stem cell research in the world. For more information, please visit www.cirm.ca.gov.

About the Cancer Stem Cell Consortium The Cancer Stem Cell Consortium is a not-for-profit corporation that was incorporated in 2007 to coordinate an international strategy for cancer stem cell research and related translational activities. The strategy will allow the biomedical community to move quickly and effectively from discoveries to application in the clinic; establish partnerships among organizations from Canada, California and other jurisdictions to accelerate and synergize research and translation opportunities related to cancer stem cells; and secure investments from governments, private foundations and the private sector for sustained and stable research funding. Current Consortium members include: Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), Genome Canada, Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), Ontario Institute for Cancer Research (OICR) and the Stem Cell Network. For more information please visit www.cancerstemcellconsortium.ca.
